

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. LIBYA: CIVILIAN OFFICIALS ANXIOUS ABOUT QADHAFI'S
RULE

EMBASSY TRIPOLI REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT QADHAFI CONTINUES TO
MAKE POLICY DECISIONS VIRTUALLY ALONE. HIS ROLE IS SUCH
THAT TOP FINANCE OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY COMPLAINED PRIVATELY
TO A WESTERN NEWSMAN THAT THEY HAVE NO CONTROL WHATSOEVER
OVER SIGNIFICANT PORTIONS OF THE NATIONAL BUDGET.

THESE CIVILIAN OFFICIALS APPARENTLY APPROVE OF THE CURRENT
PACE AND DIRECTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND, TO A LESSER

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DEGREE, OF QADHAFI'S FIRM STANCE ON MIDEAST ISSUES. THEY
ARE INCREASINGLY APPREHENSIVE, HOWEVER, ABOUT:

--LIBYA'S CONSTANT CONFRONTATIONS WITH OTHER ARAB
NATIONS;

--QADHAFI'S INSISTENCE ON HIS OWN INTERPRETATION OF

ISLAM;

--THE TREND TOWARD CLOSER TIES WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES;

--LIBYA'S INVOLVEMENT WITH FAR-FLUNG LIBERATION MOVEMENTS;

--LIBYAN "AID" TO COUNTRIES AND GROUPS WHO SUPPORT QADHAFI'S DREAMS OF WORLD INFLUENCE; AND

--THE GOVERNMENT'S HIGH LEVEL OF MILITARY SPENDING.

IN SHORT, THERE IS A GENERAL BELIEF THAT QADHAFI'S MEGALOMANIA SHOULD NOT BE FUELED INDEFINITELY WITH LIBYA'S MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE--OIL, A LIMITED ASSET WHICH SHOULD BE DEVOTED TO MORE ENDURING INVESTMENTS. (CONFIDENTIAL) TRIPOLI 396, 3/29.)

2. THE PRC AND US-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS

CONSULATE GENERAL HONG KONG REPORTS THAT THE PRC APPEARS TO BE AMBIVALENT ON THE QUESTION OF NORMALIZATION OF US-VIETNAMESE RELATIONS. TO THE EXTENT THAT NORMALIZATION WOULD HELP TO COUNTERBALANCE SOVIET INFLUENCE, PEKING MIGHT WELCOME IT. HOWEVER, THE PRC WOULD VIEW WITH SUSPICION ANY MOVE THAT SERVED TO ENHANCE VIETNAM'S INFLUENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. THE CONSULATE BELIEVES THE CHINESE WOULD PARTICULARLY RESENT ANY NORMALIZATION MOVE
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WITH THE VIETNAMESE IN THE ABSENCE OF FORWARD MOVEMENT IN US-PRC RELATIONS. THIS WOULD "ALMOST INEVITABLY" RESULT IN INCREASED PRESSURE FROM PEKING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FULL US-PRC DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. (SECRET) HONG KONG 3492 (LIMDIS), 3/29.)
CHRISTOPHER

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